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ABSTRACT

In order to communicate well with English-speaking people, the Japanese need to have some understanding of the cultures of English-speaking countries. Since what is taught in secondary schools in Japan depends heavily on the textbook used, it is useful to find out what and how much about American culture is being included in the textbook used. A review of seven studies of textbooks used in Japanese secondary schools reveals the conclusion that American culture is not addressed extensively in any textbook series. In addition, the textbooks do not exploit some of the material available in the textbooks, such as covert culture in illustrations or vocabulary that have a cultural meaning different from the same vocabulary in Japanese. (Author/MSE)

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# THE TEACHING OF AMERICAN CULTURE IN SECONDARY ENGLISH COURSES IN JAPAN: AN ANALYSIS OF TEXTBOOKS

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## Abstract

In order to communicate well with English-speaking people, Japanese need to have some understanding of their cultures. Since what is taught in secondary schools depends heavily on the textbook, it is useful to analyze textbooks to find out what and how much is being included in the textbook in relation to American culture. In this paper, I summarized seven studies that have been done on textbooks used in Japanese secondary schools. In general, the conclusion of the studies are that American culture is not included extensively in any series of textbooks. Also, the textbooks do not exploit some of the material that they could make use of, such as covert culture in illustrations or vocabulary words that have a cultural backgrounds different from those in Japanese. In recent years, the trend has been to include information about countries other than English-speaking countries.

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# THE TEACHING OF AMERICAN CULTURE IN SECONDARY ENGLISH COURSES IN JAPAN: AN ANALYSIS OF TEXTBOOKS

## Introduction

Although Japan and the United States have had diplomatic and commercial relations for more than a century, communication and understanding between the two nations are still insufficient. More Japanese people are encountering more American people, products, information and culture on a daily basis than ever before. Thus, better understanding and communication between the citizens of the two cultures is necessary.

Communication is affected by all aspects of culture--the speakers' languages and dialects, their experiences and prior knowledge, kinesics, the social restrictions on directness of speech, etc. Japanese and Americans have very different cultural backgrounds and such differences are major barriers to communication between them. In the United States, the importance of teaching culture was well recognized after World War II and has become one of the two major emphases in the teaching of foreign languages, the other being individualized instruction (Lafayette, 1975).

American culture has been emphasized in English instruction in Japan recently, as communication is stressed. However, no books and articles on what to teach about American culture and how to teach it are available in Japan. Very few studies in this field have been made, and none of them is based on experiment or surveys with a an adequate sample size across wide areas of American culture (Kitao, 1978).

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I administered questionnaires to Japanese students in the United States in order to find out how much American culture is taught in English classes in Japan, how well it is taught and what cultural problems those students experienced. The result of the survey shows that there is little foundation for understanding and communication between Japanese and American people. The Japanese students were taught very little about American culture in English courses at any level, so their understanding of American culture was quite limited. As a result they had some problems understanding Americans and communicating with them (Kitao, 1978).

## Cultural Information and English Textbooks

There are many ways to investigate what and how much is taught about American culture in secondary schools (junior and senior high schools--from seventh to twelfth grade) in Japan, such as through examinations, observations, interviews, and other means. However, it is hard to obtain accurate, objective results since what is taught varies from place to place. The easiest approach is through the examination of English textbooks.

This procedure is valid because, as Kurokawa (1973) has stated, textbooks are the most important element in school education. All textbooks used in elementary and secondary schools must be authorized by the Ministry of Education. They are strictly based on the guidelines formulated by the Ministry of Education. Most teachers use only one such textbook and rely upon it entirely while they teach English. Therefore, textbooks are the center of English instruction and thus restrict the contents of English teaching.

Since the audio-lingual method was first adopted in junior high schools, many oral exercises have been added to English classes in addition to the usual reading and translating exercises found in most textbooks. These last two types have less influence now but are still the main focus of English instruction. In senior high schools, English teaching is based solely on textbooks. The teaching there is almost entirely reading and translating from the textbooks. Students read the textbooks very attentively, so the books do have great influence and are quite important in English courses.

In English textbooks, the teaching materials are most important in terms of culture. Teaching material is defined as "concrete educational contents selected for learners in order to accomplish their educational goals" (Shibasaki, 1974: 16).

Along with grammar, vocabulary, reading materials, etc., the presentation of cultural information is recognized as one of the most important aspects of English textbooks. Danesi (1976) has said that it is one of the four important broad criteria for foreign language textbooks. Ahara (1976) has offered four criteria in selecting teaching material, of which two are: "whether the teaching materials are based on daily life," and "whether they promote international understanding and communication." Shibasaki (1974) has also pointed out four types of teaching materials that are important in expediting the learning of English, the third one being material on the cultural background of English. The background culture of English is at least one of the four most important items contained in English teaching materials.

According to the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education, foreign language textbooks must include such items as

daily life, manners and customs, stories, geography, and history of the people who speak the language as well as of other people throughout the world (Ide, 1972). Until the mid-1960's, however, this was only a matter of theory, not practice. Now teachers are beginning to pay more attention to nonlinguistic subject matter, according to the results of a questionnaire (Imura, 1975). As Ikemiya (1976: 21) has reported:

> In readers of ten years ago, literature and essays occupied 70% of the teaching material, but in the latest textbooks, only 50%, and biology, geology, chemistry, biography, and problems of cities have shown up. Cultural-anthropological and sociolinguistic teaching material has been gradually introduced. However, since international exchange is getting more frequent and more intercultural communication occurs, such teaching material should be introduced more often.

As time has passed, more cultural materials have been included in English textbooks, and they have been emphasized more by teachers. The third branch meeting of the Round Table Meeting of Improvement for English Education in Japan reported that sentence patterns and grammar had tended to be emphasized too much and reminded teachers to emphasize all five of the categories of teaching material. The first was concerned with daily life, and the fifth was intended to promote international understanding (Imura, 1976).

People in the profession of teaching English have emphasized the importance of the inclusion of culture in English textbooks, but unfortunately, the books do not have much cultural information, and they are not interesting. This boring teaching material has caused students to lose their motivation to learn

English (Ahara, 1976). Culture can be one of the factors that can increase students' motivation; therefore, more interesting cultural items should be contained in English textbooks.

In this paper, "culture" is defined as the knowledge and behavior that a people in the same language community have learned and share among themselves.

## Previous studies of English Textbooks

There have been a few studies on culture in English textbooks in Japan. I will discuss them in detail.

### English Conversation Textbooks

Hatori (1975) reviewed six English conversation textbooks used in senior high schools (see Appendix A). He compared their inside-cover material, their appendices, the number of units, their contents, their organization, and the patterns of English usage contained therein.[1] The summary in Table 1 is limited to the first three aspects that concern culture.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF HATORI'S STUDY

| Textbooks | Inside covers: Front | Inside covers: Back | Appendix | Number of Units and Contents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Crown English Conversation | Introduction of characters | Songs | A song (1 page) | 15 expressions, feeling, judgment, choice, etc. |

TABLE 1 (Con't)

SUMMARY OF HATORI'S STUDY

| Textbooks | Inside covers | | Appendix | Number of Units and Contents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Front | Back | | |
| Daily Conversation | Map and pictures of New York | Map and pictures of London | 2 groups of useful expressions: (a) greetings, weather, etc. (b) visit, telephone, in the train, etc. | 40<br>1-12 school life<br>13-24 home life<br>25-40 social life<br>25-30 Britain<br>31-40 U.S.A. |
| Let's Talk English | Blank | Blank | New words, useful expressions, notes | 17<br>"A Friendly Walk"<br>"The Party"<br>"In the Station and the Train" |
| Ted and Julie | Blank | Blank | Index<br>school life, health, showing the way, weather, etc. | 20<br>"Ted & Julie on the Way to School"<br>"Everybody Talks about the Weather," "It's Nice to Make Friends," etc. |

TABLE 1 (Con't)

SUMMARY OF HATORI'S STUDY

| Textbooks | Inside covers: Front | Inside covers: Back | Appendix | Number of Units and Contents |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oral English Workshop | Situations and Expressions | Gestures | Basic expressions, dialogues | 9 |
| English Conversation for Young People | Scene at school | Introduction of characters | Index useful expressions | 27 "In the Classroom" "Introducing Friends" etc. |

Since the purpose of English conversation courses is to teach the ABC's of daily conversation in English, their subject matter is concerned with the daily life of students at home, at school, and in society (Ministry of Education, 1972). Table 1 shows that all the textbooks of English conversation have information on daily life in Britain and the United States and also practical information (information useful for traveling around or living in those countries, such as using a telephone, traveling, using money, shopping, etc.). Hatori noted that Oral English Workshop has illustrations of gestures inside the back cover but that no other English textbooks at the junior or senior high school level present nonverbal communication systematically.

Judging from the topics Hatori cites as examples, most textbooks introduce American and British life. Students can learn from them about the background culture of English. Only The Crown English Conversation seems to be expression-oriented

and to be constructed on the basis of frequently used expressions in daily conversations, though all the textbooks are situation-oriented and are constructed on the basis of situations that frequently occur in daily life or that learners may encounter when they visit those countries, as their appendices show. These textbooks would seem to be well designed, for culture should be taught through expressions in situations, and they offer expression in various common situations.

English conversation courses seem to give the most cultural information, including practical information, on the senior high school level. The textbooks used in those courses have more cultural information than the other English textbooks. Their subject matter is directly concerned with daily life at home, at school, and in the society of Britain and the United States.

However, Hatori did not outline the total subject matter, so we cannot know the total cultural information in these textbooks or how accurate this information is. Moreover, since English conversation is an elective, only 1.6 percent of the students in the senior high schools use these textbooks, according to statistics from the Ministry of Education (Hatori, 1975).

This is the only study of culture in English textbooks for senior high school students that the writer has found. I could not find any study on culture in textbooks for English A, English B or elementary English.[2] However, there are a few thorough studies on culture in junior high school English textbooks.

## Studies of Junior High School Textbooks

Ide (1972) and Saito (1974) have made extensive studies of culture in English textbooks at the junior high school level. Ide (1972) reviewed five textbook series, fifteen books in all

(see Appendix B) and Saito (1974) reviewed four series of revised textbooks totaling twelve books (see Appendix C). The major concern of both studies was to describe what cultural information is contained in the books.

Ide's study. Ide (1972) did two major studies. One was to find out what subjects were contained in the textbooks and how many of them were contained in each (see results in Table 2). She used nine categories: (1) objects around people, (2) daily life, (3) manners and customs, (4) scenes and nature, (5) geography, history, and language, (6) science, (7) stories, (8) ideas and imagination, and (9) miscellaneous. The second study was to find out how close the cultural information in these textbooks was to the Japanese culture (see results in Table 3).

TABLE 2

SUBJECT MATTER OF ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

| | New Prince | | | New Horizon | | | Total | | | Everyday | | | Blue Sky | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Objects around people | B | | | A | | | C | | | B | | | C | | |
| Daily life | C | B | D | B | B | B | A | B | D | A | B | C | A | A | B |
| Manners and customs | D | D | D | | C | C | | D | D | D | | D | | D | C |
| Scenes and nature | C | | C | | D | | | D | D | D | | D | D | C | C |

TABLE 2 (Con't)

SUBJECT MATTER OF ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

| | New Prince | | | New Horizon | | | Total | | | Everyday | | | Blue Sky | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Geography, history, language | D | B | | C | D | | D | | | D | D | | D | C | |
| Science | D | D | | | | | | C | | D | | | | | |
| Stories | D | B | B | C | B | | D | B | | C | B | | C | B | |
| Ideas, imagination | | D | | | | | B | C | | | | | | C | |
| Other | | D | | | | | D | C | | | | | | C | |

A = in more than half of the units

B = in more than one third of the units

C = in more than two units

D = in one or two units

TABLE 3

DIFFERENCES OF CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

OF THEMES IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

| | New Prince | | | New Horizon | | | Total | | | Everyday | | | Blue Sky | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Content Rating | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a+ | D | D | D | | | D | | | C | | | D | | | C |
| a | B | C | D | A | B | D | A | B | C | A | C | D | A | C | C |
| b | C | C | | D | C | C | C | D | | C | D | | C | C | D |
| c | C | C | | | D | D | | D | D | | D | | | C | C |
| c+ | D | C | B | | C | C | C | C | B | D | B | A | D | C | C |
| d | | D | B | | D | B | | D | | | C | D | | C | B |

A = more than 2/3 of the units

B = more than 1/3 of the units

C = more than 2 units

D = 1 or 2 units

Her first study shows that all fifteen textbooks include daily life. Yet, only four include it in more than half of the units, and four textbooks have it in fewer than one third of the units. Manners and customs are seldom introduced. Four textbooks do not mention them at all while the eight that do include them have them in only one or two units, and none of the textbooks refers to them in more than one third of the units. Geography, history, and language do not appear at all in six textbooks, and in only one textbook do they appear in more than

one third of the units. Scenes and nature are not introduced at all in five textbooks, and they are not introduced in more than one third of the units in any textbook; therefore, no textbook displays much cultural information.

Table 2 (Ide, 1972: 15) shows that all textbooks use similar approaches. They move from concrete things to abstract things. In every series, objects connected with people are introduced in Book 1. The same approach is adopted in culture. Ide's second study shows this clearly. She classified cultural information in four major categories: (a), (b), (c), and (d). Category (a) is the same as Japanese culture, and it includes the introduction of Japanese culture, which is marked (a$^{+}$). Category (b) is partially overlapping with Japanese culture. Category (c) is different from Japanese culture, and things that do not exist in Japanese are marked (c$^{+}$). Foreign culture that is not part of English speakers' normal experience is classified (d).

As Table 3 (Ide, 1972: 16) shows, all textbooks have sequences which go from cultural information similar to that found in the Japanese culture to the cultural aspects that are new to the Japanese people. All the textbooks display Class (a) most in Book 1 and least in Book 3, and Class (c$^{+}$) least in Book 1 and most in Book 3. No textbooks present aspects of other foreign cultures in Book 1. The order of introducing cultural information is very good.

However, Classes (b), (c), and (c$^{+}$) do not appear often in these textbooks. Class (b) appears in less than one third of the units, and it does not appear in three textbooks. Class (c) does not appear in six textbooks; it appears in one or two units in five textbooks. Only four textbooks contain (c$^{+}$) in more than one third of the units.

Ide does not explain how she did her studies, but they seem to have been done by units. If one unit had even a little information, then it appears that she counted the entire unit. Therefore, these figures may appear to indicate that these textbooks contain more cultural information than they really do. Another weak point of her study is that she reviewed only the main body of the textbooks, not the appendices, covers, etc. Furthermore, she provided only nine categories of cultural information.

Saito's study. Saito (1974) has also made broad studies of the cultural information found in four junior high school English textbook series (see results in Table 4 [Saito, 1974: 16]). He provided fifteen categories, rather than nine. Eight categories were added--people around us, greetings, classroom English, sports, biography, international understanding, poems, and songs. He reviewed not only the lessons proper but also the inside covers, appendices, etc. (see results in Table 5 [Saito, 1974: 17]).

TABLE 4

CONNECTIONS OF THEMES IN THE REVISED ENGLISH BOOKS

| Themes | Grade: 7 (Book 1) | | | | 8 (Book 2) | | | | 9 (Book 3) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Textbook: E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T |
| Objects around us | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| People around us | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | |
| Daily life | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Manners and customs | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Greetings | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |

TABLE 4 (Con't)

CONNECTIONS OF THEMES IN THE REVISED ENGLISH BOOKS

| Themes | Grade: 7 (Book 1) | | | | 8 (Book 2) | | | | 9 (Book 3) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Textbook: E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T |
| Classroom English | | X | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Sports | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Biography | | | | | X | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Geography, scenery, history | X | X | | | X | X | X | | X | X | | |
| International understanding | | | | X | | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Science | | | | | X | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Observation of nature | | | | X | | | | X | | | X | X |
| Dramas and stories | | | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Poems | | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Songs | | | | | X | | X | | X | | | |

E = Everyday English

H = New Horizon English Course

P = New Prince English Course

T = Total English Junior Crown Series

X = Item contained in the textbook

TABLE 5

COMPARISON AMONG ITEMS OUTSIDE THE TEXT PROPER IN THE REVISED TEXTBOOKS

| Themes | Grade: 7th | | | | 8th | | | | 9th | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Textbook: E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T | E | H | P | T |
| Songs | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Illustrations | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Pictures of objects around us | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Scenery (12 months) | | | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Picture of scenes in the main text | | | | | | | | X | | | | X |
| Maps | | | | | | X | | X | | | | |
| Proverbs | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Poems | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Greetings | | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Daily conversation | | | | | | | | X | | | | |

E = Everyday English

H = New Horizon English Course

P = New Prince English Course

T = Total English Junior Crown Series

X = Item contained in the textbook

The first study shows that all twelve textbooks include daily life, manners, and customs. Objects around us are included in Book 1 (seventh grade) of all the series, and people around us, Books 1 and 2 (eighth grade). Dramas and stories are

included in Books 2 and 3 of some but not all of the series. Biography is contained in Book 3 of all the series. However, geography, scenery, and history are not included at all in the Total English Junior Course Series, and they are included in only Book 2 of the New Prince English Course.

Greetings are included in Book 1 in all of the series except the Total English Junior Crown Series, though this does not include them in other sections. All of the textbooks contain songs, either in the main text or in other parts. Illustrations are contained in every book, but only two textbooks have maps. Nonverbal communication is not dealt with in any of these textbooks at all.

Saito's study shows what kind of cultural information is contained in the English textbooks at the junior high level, but it does not show how much cultural information is contained.

Conclusion. These two studies quantify and describe the subject matter found in junior high school English textbooks. It is obvious that little cultural information is contained in these textbooks. Moreover, such cultural information is twofold, being based on an overlapping of culture between Japan and the United States, on one hand, and, on the other, on the culture unique to the United States. Therefore, one can easily understand how little of the latter is contained in these textbooks. These two studies show the outline of the types of cultural information in the textbooks, but they do not include sensitive measures of how much such information is contained and whether it is accurate.

## Comparison with Another Series

In a fourth study, Yoshida (1975) compares five English textbooks at the junior high level with L'anglais par

L'illustration, which is the most widely used English textbooks in France. He made his comparison using five series of textbooks, fifteen in all, and the first three volumes of L'anglais par L'illustration. The major parts of his study were concerned with illustration and vocabulary in terms of culture.

Yoshida points out that the French textbook has almost twice as many pages, and many times more pictures and photos than the Japanese textbooks. He also points out that though all the Japanese textbooks have illustrations, there are only two pages of photos (there are two or three color photos in each textbook). Japanese textbooks have poor visual materials, in comparison to the French textbooks, and most of the culture is presented entirely in English.

Yoshida's study emphasizes vocabulary. The French textbook contains 656 words relating to home life, people, nature, social life, school life, time, and community. Of those 656 words, 269 were not included in the Japanese textbooks. A breakdown of those 269 words are shown in Table 6 (Yoshida, 1975: 15).

TABLE 6

NUMBER OF WORDS THAT APPEAR IN L'ANGLAIS PAR L'ILLUSTRATION BUT DO NOT APPEAR IN ANY OF THE JAPANESE TEXTBOOKS

| | Number of Words |
|---|---|
| Home Life | 99 |
| People | 58 |
| Nature | 55 |
| Social Life | 35 |
| School Life | 9 |
| Time | 7 |
| Community | 6 |
| Total | 269 |

Table 6 (Yoshida, 1975: 15) shows that 99 words about home life, 58 words about people, 55 words about nature, and 35 words about social life included in the French books are not introduced in the Japanese books. Thus we can see that Japanese textbooks are lacking in vocabulary, particularly vocabulary involving home life. Among the 58 words about people that are not included, most (36) refer to occupations, as Table 7 (Yoshida, 1975: 16) shows. In addition, Ide (1976) has pointed out that very few of the words that are included convey much of the culture of the English-speaking people. Of the 610 words required to be taught in junior high school English classes by the Ministry of Education, only a very few words cannot be understood without explanations of English speakers' culture. Thus, Japanese

textbooks do not exploit vocabulary to convey cultural information about English speakers.

TABLE 7

NUMBER OF WORDS CONCERNED WITH PEOPLE

| | a French Textbook | b Japanese Textbook | a-b |
|---|---|---|---|
| Human Relationships | 13 | 11 | 2 |
| Family | 19 | 14 | 5 |
| Human Body | 35 | 20 | 15 |
| Occupations | 58 | 22 | 36 |
| Total | 125 | 67 | 58 |

It is somewhat surprising that Japanese textbooks still have few photos and pictures and have little vocabulary pertaining to cultural information. French textbooks have a number of illustrations and words that describe situations. Since all of the series of Japanese textbooks have fewer illustrations and less vocabulary than the French series, it is obvious that none of the Japanese series have as much cultural information as the French series in terms of vocabulary and illustrations.

The studies of junior high school English textbooks were concerned with the volume of cultural information. The first two dealt with subject matter and the last with illustrations and vocabulary. They were not concerned with the quality of the

cultural information and how accurate it was. Of course, they did not reveal whether any covert culture had been presented at all.

Accuracy and Covert Culture

An examiner of textbooks at the Ministry of Education, reviewed five English textbooks for seventh-grade students (Book 1) from the viewpoint of culture and customs (Ogasawara, 1972). The reason he chose the beginning book was that he wanted to show that a great deal of culture was taught through such elementary textbooks. Therefore, the main part of this study was a discussion of how cultural information was presented and how accurate it was in each textbook.

He chose eighteen points and discussed them. These eighteen points involved names and occupational positions, conversations among American people, the use of the national flag, the use of words--ladies and gentlemen, friend, and friendly--greetings, men and women, sharing work at home, married students, the use of commands, house numbers, train stations, fences around houses, furniture in living rooms, class schedules, world maps, and classes of objects. His observations were detailed so that he picked up very small things such as words, scenes, parts of pictures, etc., and he discussed their cultural relationships.

His study revealed that each of the English textbooks provided much covert cultural information. Some of it was wrong, but it is not very obvious from his discussion how much covert cultural information the books contained. He gives only a few examples; there are presumably more examples of covert culture in these textbooks, and surely some in Books 2 and 3 as well.

Summary

These five studies show that some aspects of culture are taught in English conversations classes at senior high schools. However, the exact cultural information in these textbooks is not known, except for a few examples, and nothing concerned with English A and English B has been studied.

English teaching at the junior high level can be best understood by looking at the last four studies. One understands what subject matter is presented through the textbooks, how much cultural information is provided by the units and by other sections apart from the main text, and how close such cultural aspects are to Japanese culture. Even if these studies do not show the exact volume of cultural information contained in the textbooks, one can estimate from the vocabulary and illustrations that there is much less cultural information than in the French textbooks. Ogasawara made it clear that even beginning textbooks contained some covert cultural information, and he discussed the accuracy of the cultural information.

## Evaluating English Textbooks in Terms of Culture

In the previous studies there were two major kinds of analyses of English textbooks from the viewpoint of culture--objective and subjective. The objective approach quantified and described the cultural information included, usually in terms of units, words, and illustrations. The subjective approach involved the researcher's judgment of the accuracy with which the textbooks presented cultural information, based on experience and knowledge of the background culture of English. The former gives a rough idea of how much cultural information is available and

its subject matter, and the latter gives an indication of what covert culture is included and how accurately the material is presented.

Both approaches have drawbacks. For example, the objective approach, as it is applied by these researchers, does not show the actual volume of cultural information except in terms of the number of units. How much cultural information is contained in a single unit is not revealed. The result will only show that each unit counted has such cultural information. This method also fails to show how accurately the cultural information is presented. On the other hand, the subjective method does not show which subject matter or what kind of cultural information is contained as a whole. However, it does show how accurately the material is presented, at least in the judgment of the researcher. Both methods have merits and drawbacks, the strengths of the one being the weaknesses of the other. Thus both methods should be adopted in the analysis of English textbooks.

Another shortcoming of these studies is that the writers did not explain how such subject matter categories were chosen, how criteria were established, etc. In other words, we cannot know the exact procedures of the studies.

### Joiner's Form

Only a few studies show methods of analysis of cultural information in foreign-language textbooks. Joiner (1974) developed a form for evaluating the cultural content of a foreign-language text. Her study has four major sections: (1) illustration, (2) texts containing material of a cultural nature, (3) general questions related to culture, and (4) supplementary

material available from the publisher. Section I of the form for evaluation is divided into three parts. The first is about types of illustrations and their quantity; the second is about the society represented by the illustrations (socio-economic groups, ages, etc.); and the third, the subjective evaluation of cultural information in those illustrations on continua from authentic to inauthentic, inoffensive to controversial, etc. Section II contains three parallel parts on texts. The first two are checklists of types of texts (explanatory cultural notes, songs, etc.) and segments of society represented in the texts. The third evaluates the text in terms of whether it is positive, lively, balances, etc. Section III has six questions about bias, stereotypes, the overall impression of the book, etc., that call for examiners to give subjective answers concerned with cultural information. The last section (Section IV) is on what is available as supplementary material. The evaluation form that she presents is very long, including many vague questions that call for subjective answers. This form does not classify items in regard to the culture involved; thus a revision of this form is necessary.

High School English Readers

The purpose of this study is to find out what is taught about American culture and how well it is taught in English courses in junior and senior high schools by examining the authorized (Monbusho-approved) English textbooks used in classes.

Measurement Instrument. Using Joiner's "Form for Evaluating the Cultural Content of Foreign Language Texts" as a basis, I made a new revised form for analyzing the cultural information in texts (Kitao, 1979). The objective parts of Joiner's form were

adopted (Section 1, Part A, and Section 2, Part A). The former was used with only the addition of "portraits" since so many portraits appear in Japanese texts. However, contents of the latter were changed. It was divided into two divisions: type of writing and subject matter, using many categories from Powell (1955) on both of these and from Doty and Ross (1973) on subject matter only. This new form includes a checklist of culture with a big C, culture with a small c,[3] practical information, and covert culture[4].

Texts Analyzed. For this study (Kitao, 1979), I analyzed ten series of high school reading textbooks (see Appendix D). I chose high school reading textbooks, because there are not many studies of high school English textbooks and because they seem to contain more cultural information than do composition or grammar textbooks.

Procedure. Using the form that I developed, I evaluated the textbooks. After recording basic information about the text, I counted the number of illustrations in each category, and the number in each category related to the United States. Illustrations of uncertain origin were counted as being related to American culture if they appeared to be of the United States.

I also counted the number of readings of each type related to American culture, and the number of units that included information in each area of subject matter. Any unit that included any information at all was counted.

Results and Discussion. I found that less than half of the units in the books contained any information about American culture. Eight readers (out of a total of thirty) had fewer than four such units.

As for illustrations, seventeen of the books had fewer than

two photographs related to American culture. Most of the photographs that were used were of famous places, rather than of daily life or school life in the United States. Only eleven of the readers had maps of all or part of the United States.

The readings in the textbooks were mainly essays, with some narratives and dialogues. Every series had letters, but only one had a newspaper article.

In the evaluation of content, neither American literature nor music was covered well. Every series had some geography, but four did not have any history. Even when such content was included, the coverage was light. Therefore, there was not much information about Culture with a big C.

American culture with a small c was not covered extensively, either. All of the series did have some units dealing with daily life, and seven of the series had units dealing with school life. However, only seven of the books had units dealing with manners and customs. None of the books dealt in any way with nonverbal communication.

This analysis dealt with overt culture. While I did notice some elements of covert culture, they were not necessarily easy to find, and I do not know how well they are exploited in the classroom. However, based on my own experiences and conversations with teachers and students, I doubt that they are emphasized to any extent, since most teachers tend to dwell on grammar points and translation.

Summary. The main conclusion of this study is that high school English readers in Japan in the 1970's did not present American culture well. American culture was, for the most part, not presented either through illustrations or through texts.

Cultures Included in Junior High Textbooks

Fujita (1987) analyzed six English textbook series authorized by the Ministry of Education for junior high schools (see Appendix E) from the viewpoints of what cultures are included and what aspects of American culture are included. I have summarized his study in Table 8.

TABLE 8

COUNTRIES AND TOPICS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Crown | neighbor countries | Singapore | clean and green |
| | | Korea | being forced to use a foreign language |
| | African countries | Kenya, Niger | Swahili |
| | English-speaking countries | Australia & New Zealand | geographical location |
| | | London | Speaker's corner, Cockney |
| | | US | Martin L. King |
| | | | Salt Lake |
| | | | Paul Bunyan |
| New Everyday | Asia | Cambodia | refugee camp |
| | South America | Amazon | |
| | Europe | | Marco Polo |
| | | | Pinocchio |
| | | | Henry Fabre |

TABLE 8 (Con't)

COUNTRIES AND TOPICS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | English-speaking countries | Britain | monthly views |
| | | | origin of English |
| | | | Norman Conquest |
| | | US | lunch, cafeteria |
| | | | body language |
| | | | racial problem |
| | | | saving people |
| | | | financial independence |
| New Horizon | Africa | | hunger |
| | Europe | Paris | |
| | | Norway | |
| | | | Altamira Cave |
| | | Greece | Echo |
| | English-speaking countries | Britain | London |
| | | US | Lincoln |
| | | | gestures |
| | | | manners |
| | | | camp |
| | | | giving change |
| One World | Asia | Singapore | multi-lingual |
| | Africa | Ghana | junior high kids |

TABLE 8 (Con't)

COUNTRIES AND TOPICS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | English-speaking | US | New York |
| | | | Washington, D.C. |
| | | | Indians |
| | | | barbecue |
| | | | ideas (based on ability) |
| | with Japan | | home life |
| | | | school life |
| | Japan abroad | | Ukiyoe, Kana, Shogun, Zen |
| Sunshine Japan | | | Americans |
| | Asia | Singapore | |
| | | New Guinea | |
| | Africa | Kenya | protecting animals |
| | English-speaking | Australia | railroad |
| | | Britain | daily life |
| | | | April Fool |
| | | US | conversations during meals |
| | | | colors |
| | | | grades |
| | | | New York |
| Total | Asia | Singapore | multi languages |
| | Europe | | Troy |
| | | | Anne Frank |
| | | | William Tell |
| | | | Aesop's fables |

TABLE 8 (Con't)

COUNTRIES AND TOPICS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| English-speaking | Australia | seasons, animals |
| | Canada | Quebec, others |
| | Britain | Silas Marner |
| | | Romeo and Juliet |
| | US | Houston and Chiba |
| | | Little house on Prairie |
| | | proverbs |
| | | holidays |
| | | etiquette |

Fujita points out that all of the textbooks handle English-speaking countries in the seventh grade, neighboring countries in the eighth grade, and other countries in the ninth grade. He also found that seventh grade textbooks deal with scenes and daily life, eighth grade texts with customs and traditions, and ninth grade texts with a variety of world cultures. He concludes that all textbooks handle a sufficient variety of cultures and if students spend enough time studying English with any of the six textbook series, they will be aware of different cultures.

A new trend in English textbooks is to include information about a variety of countries rather than only the United States and Britain or even English-speaking countries, treating English as an international language rather than a language of English-speaking people. A sufficient variety of cultures are introduced, and students using these texts will be made aware of



Otsuka, T., et al. (1974). The new age readers. Book 3. Tokyo: Kenkyusha.

Saeki, S., et al. (1973). The vista English readers. Book 1. Tokyo: Sanseido.

Saeki, S., et al. (1974). The vista English readers. Book 2. Tokyo: Sanseido.

Saeki, S., et al. (1975). The vista English readers. Book 3. Tokyo: Sanseido.

Sakaki, T. et al. (1973). High road to English reading. Book 1. Tokyo: Sanseido.

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Sawasaki, K., et al. (1975b). Shorter English readers. Book 2. Tokyo: Kairyudo.

Sawasaki, K., et al. (1975c). Shorter English readers. Book 3. Tokyo: Kairyudo.

Tachibana, S., et al. (1973). New vision English readers. Book 1. Tokyo: Kairyudo.

Tachibana, S., et al. (1974). New vision English readers. Book 2. Tokyo: Kairyudo.

Tachibana, S., et al. (1975). New vision English readers. Book 3. Tokyo: Kairyudo.

Yasui, M., et al. (1973). Better guide to English reading. Book 1. Tokyo: Kaitakusha.

Yasui, M., et al. (1974). Better guide to English reading. Book 2. Tokyo: Kaitakusha.

diversity of cultures in the world. However, this may not help students communicate with people in English, particularly with Americans and other English-speaking people.

There are many cultural aspects of English which people need to know in order to communicate with others in English. Functions of communication such as greetings, showing appreciation, agreeing and disagreeing, compliments, apologizing, inviting, and suggesting all include cultural aspects, and such aspects are somewhat different in English and Japanese. It is also important to know people and their background for effective communication. These textbooks do not necessarily provide enough information for the basis of good communication with Americans.

## Aspects of American Culture Included in Junior High Texts

In order to find out what is taught about American culture in recent American textbooks, I surveyed all of the government-authorized series of English textbooks used in junior high school in 1988 (see Appendix E), six series of three textbooks each.

Methods. The survey included the inside covers, main texts and appendices. I counted how many times American cultural items appeared in different units or in appendices or inside covers. The classification system used was the list of American cultural items from the Test of American Culture (Kitao, 1979). The functions of greeting and introduction were added to the list, since they are culturally important and commonly used.

Instances of the categories of American culture were counted according to how many units, insides of covers, or appendices they appeared in. The same item was counted only once, even if it appeared in more than one unit or in the inside covers or appendices. For example, if "Mr." was used in one unit, it is

counted as one instance of form of address. Even if it was used again in another unit, if it is used to refer to the same person, it is not counted again. I counted the occurrence of items related to American culture in all of the textbooks twice and an assistant checked all the items that were different in the two counts and finalized the results.

Results and discussion. The results are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF AMERICAN CULTURAL INFORMATION

IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN 1988

| | New Crown | | | New Everyday | | | New Horizon | | | One World | | | Sunshine | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. Literature | | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | | 3 | 2 |
| 2. Music | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 3. History | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | |
| 4. Industry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Politics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Famous Places | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 1 |
| 7. States | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 8. Transportation | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Superstition | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Sports | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 1 | |
| 11. Religion | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Newspapers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13. Magazines | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14. The Economy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. Education | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 |
| 16. Leisure | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 17. TV and Movies | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | |

TABLE 9 (Con't)

SUMMARY OF AMERICAN CULTURAL INFORMATION

IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN 1988

| | New Crown | | | New Everyday | | | New Horizon | | | One World | | | Sunshine | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. Medicine | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. Sex Roles | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20. The Family | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21. Driving | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 1 |
| 22. Holidays | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 23. Events and Ceremonies | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 24. Customs | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 2 | | | 1 | | | | |
| 25. American Character | | | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 26. Temperature | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27. Shopping | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 28. Postage | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29. The Telephone | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| 30. Money | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 31. Letters | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 1 |
| 32. Measurements | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33. Measurements | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 34. Nicknames | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35. Food | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 1 | |
| 36. Meals | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | |
| 37. Table Setting | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | |
| 38. Table Seating | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 39. Manners | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |

TABLE 9 (Con't)

SUMMARY OF AMERICAN CULTURAL INFORMATION

IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN 1988

| | New Crown 1 2 3 | New Everyday 1 2 3 | New Horizon 1 2 3 | One World 1 2 3 | Sunshine 1 2 3 | Total 1 2 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40. Etiquette | | | | | | |
| 41. Drink | | | | | | |
| 42. Forms of Address | 2 2 2 | 2 3 1 | 2 2 5 | 2 3 1 | 1 1 | 2 1 1 |
| 43. The House | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| 44. Cleanliness | | | | | | |
| 45. Housekeeping | | | | | | |
| 46. Clothes | | | | | | |
| 47. Gestures | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | |
| 48. Space | | | | | | |
| 49. Time | | 1 | | | | |
| 50. Color | | | | | 1 | |
| greeting | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| introduction | 1 1 | 2 | 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 | 3 | 1 1 1 |

These results indicate the maximum amount of American cultural information contained in textbooks. For example, if baseball is included in an American context, it is counted as one instance of sports. If someone buys something with American money, it is counted one instance for money.

Among the fifty-two items, twenty-one, more than one third, never appear in any of the 18 textbooks. Among those are many items such as measurements, temperature, nicknames, space and clothes which could be easily incorporated into daily

conversation or living.

Every series includes music in every text, famous places, sports, letters, forms of address, greetings, and introductions in at least one text. Five series included literature. Four include states, education, TV and movies, holidays, shopping, and telephone.

All textbooks tend to include certain items such as literature, music and sports. Literature is usually poetry or a story retold in easy English. Music usually appears in appendices. The instances of sports are usually football, baseball or basketball played by Americans. For communication purposes, letters, greetings, and introductions are included, but the telephone is included in only five out of eighteen textbooks and some students don't learn how to talk on the phone.

The most commonly used famous places were New York and San Francisco. The textbooks do not use suburbs of medium size cities, which are probably a typical American living place.

It is often said that Culture with a big C is often taught but culture with a small c is not. However, according to these results, Culture with a big C is not necessarily included much, except for some literature and music.

If teachers exploit these American culture items well and expand on them in the lesson, students will learn something about American culture. In general, if teachers do not develop information in class, students' knowledge will be very limited. Many of the items that were counted were only mentioned briefly in passing, so without additional explanation by the teacher, they cannot be understood well, and may not even by noticed by students. Also, such items as music are included mainly in the appendices, which in many cases are not taught in class. Since

each series of textbooks includes only 13-20 items out of the 52 items, these textbooks do not introduce enough American culture for good communication with Americans, visiting the United States or living there without much trouble.

## Conclusion

These surveys indicate that not much is taught about American culture in English courses in Japan on the junior high or high school level. Though a number of aspects of American culture are mentioned in passing, they must be explained by the teachers in order for students to benefit from them, or students will not be likely to understand them fully. However, in spite of this problem, there appears to have been an increase in the presentation of aspects of American culture over the past decade.

One important trend in English textbooks in Japan is that they are now presenting the cultures of various countries. While this helps make students aware of a number of cultures, it does not prepare them to communicate with the members of a particular culture.

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1 This table was made by this writer and its contents were translated from Hatori (1975).

2 English A is for students in a vocational program, English B is for students in a liberal arts program, and shokyu Eigo [elementary English] is for students who have not studied English in junior high school.

3 According to Allen and Valette (1972: 245), Culture with a big C is "Achievements and contributions to civilization, art, music, literature, architecture, technology, scientific discoveries, and politics," and culture with a small c, "the behavioral patterns or life styles of the people: when and what they eat, how they make a living, the way they organize their society, the attitude they express toward friends and members of their families, how they act in different situations, which expressions they use to show approval and disapproval, the traditions they must observe and so on."

4 Covert culture is culture "which is not visible and presents difficulties even to the trained observer" (Hall, 1959: 60).

5 In this study, I have referred to many selections of Japanese literature. All translations in this study were done by me, referring to Masuda (1974). In order to keep as close as possible to the original idea in English, I translated each selections as directly as possible. For the convenience of the readers, the writer has translated all titles of Japanese books, articles, and periodicals unless they were given English titles by their authors or editors.

In the description of Japanese words, I again referred to the method adopted for Masuda (1974) and tried to transcribe them

as closely as possible into English pronunciation. Borrowed words from English were given English spelling even in Japanese in order to avoid confusion. Japanese words are underscored and translations bracketed for clarification.